THE

MODE

AND

SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

TWO DISCOURSES

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE CEDAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, N. CAROLINA,

On Sunday, September 10, 1843.

BY RICHARD FURMAN,

PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN CHERAW, SO. CA.

JOHN STUBS, PRINTER.

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THE following discourses were delivered, and are now published at the *urgent request* of the Cedar Creek Baptist Church. Prior to their delivery the author had no thought of their publication, and in assenting to it now, he yields only to the solicitations of his brethren. They were not prepared for the press, and therefore in style they are plain and unpretending. Many portions of them were entirely extemporaneous, but the author is persuaded that the substance is the same, the arguments are the same, and the language although frequently modified, and condensed, is essentially the same. He is aware that many hard things have been thought and said respecting him, since the delivery of the sermons—mainly because he has proved, or *attempted* to prove, that infant sprinkling is a relic of Popery. These persecutions he is willing to endure for the cause of truth—he is fully persuaded of the correctness of his positions—and he humbly craves in behalf of his labors, the prayers of his brethren, and the blessing of GOD.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptised."—*Acts* xxii, 16.

Every part of the truth of God is worthy of our attention and consideration. He is our Lawgiver, and King. It is our bounden duty to obey his precepts—And our first and great question ought to be, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" In order to ascertain what is the will of God, it is necessary that we should search diligently the Scriptures, that we should turn away from the traditions of men, and that we should pray for the enlightening influences of the Holy Ghost. If all christians were to pursue this course, their discords, dissentions, and jealousies would come to an end, they would be united in spirit, and in action—and as there is one Lord, so there would be one faith, and one baptism.

I arise before you, my Brethren, for the purpose of vindicating an institution, venerable from its antiquity, sacred from the character of its Author, highly important in its object, and perpetually binding in its observance. The ordinance of baptism was instituted upwards of eighteen hundred years ago, by the Lord Jesus Christ. The object of baptism is a figurative representation of the new birth. And the perpetuity of baptism is taught in various passages of Scripture. For instance, the Saviour says, "He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved." And again when He sent forth the disciples, and gave to them the broad commission of the Gospel, He said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

It is well known that different views prevail amongst christians in reference to the subject of baptism. Some, (for instance the Quakers,) reject it altogether. Some think that there are three different ways of administering the ordinance, by immersion, by sprinkling, and by pouring. But there is one denomination [illegible] contend that there is *one way, one solitary mode* of baptisi[illegible] that by immersion. This is the position of the Baptist de[illegible]

tion. And for adhering to this position with unwavering tenacity, they have been despised and persecuted, they have been laughed at and ridiculed, they have been "the sect everywhere spoken against," for many years and for many ages. But they have nothing to fear. The truth is great and will prevail. Their doctrine is built upon an everlasting foundation. The Word of God is the standard around which they rally in defence of the truth. They unfold that standard in the gaze of all the nations of the world. With it they go forth to fight the battles of the Lord. And with it they are nobly determined, they are eternally resolved to triumph or to die.

It is my purpose on the present occasion to show that immersion is the only christian baptism, and that it is contrary to all true criticism, and to the plain word of God, to introduce sprinkling, or pouring, or anything else into the place of immersion. And if I can prove this position, if I can convince you of its truth, I will call upon all believers here present, (who have not submitted to the ordinance,) in the language of my text, "why tarriest thou? arise and be baptised."

I assert, in the first place, that all true criticism, all true learning is in favor of immersion. And here it will be necessary for me to go to the original Scriptures, and prove from them the truth of what I affirm. The New Testament, you are aware, was originally written in the Greek language. And the reason is obvious. The Greeks were scattered abroad in various countries. They were in many respects the most celebrated nation of antiquity. Wherever they went their language was studied—and it soon came to be spoken more than any other language in the world. It was extremely desirable that the Gospel should be written in a language which all men could understand; and therefore, although first communicated to the Jews, it was written in the Greek language. Now in order to ascertain the meaning of the word *baptise* in our English Testaments, it is necessary that we should go to the Greek, and find out its true import in that language. The word used in the Greek is *Baptizo*. This word means properly, only to immerse—and it is the only word which occurs in the whole of the New Testament, wherever baptism is spoken of. There is another Greek word, *Bapto*, which is sometimes confounded with *Baptizo*, by persons who are not properly acquainted with the language. But they are separate and distinct words. *Bapto* is the primitive, and *Baptizo* the derivative. *Bapto* is the root, from which *Baptizo* is derived. *Bapto* has two meanings, the primary *to dip*, and the secondary *to dye*. *Baptizo* has but one meaning, *to immerse*—and as I have already stated, it is the only word used in the New Testament when immersion is spoken of. Now if the sacred writers had intended to

convey the idea that sprinkling or pouring would constitute a valid baptism, they certainly never would have used a word which signifies properly, and only, to immerse.

The Greek language abounds in words, which express, or indicate the application of water in various ways. I will present a few examples. *Louo*, to wash the person of an individual. *Nipto*, to rinse his face, hands, or feet. *Ekkeo*, to pour upon him. *Breko*, to wet or moisten. *Rantizo*, to sprinkle. Neither of these words is ever once used in the whole of the New Testament, when baptism is adverted to. As I have before stated, *baptizo* is the only word used—and baptizo means only to immerse. On this point the controversy turns; let this question be settled, and the discussion between Baptists, and the advocates of sprinkling, is forever at an end.

As recourse is generally first had to Lexicographers, we will begin with them. Let us consult some Lexicons which I have with me on the present occasion. Schrevelius gives the following meanings to *Baptizo:* baptizo (*to baptise,*) mergo (*to immerse,*) abluo (*to wash away,*) lavo (*to wash*).

Groves, "*Baptizo*, to dip, immerse, plunge; to wash, cleanse, purify; to baptize: to depress, humble, overwhelm. *Baptizomai*, to wash one's self, to bathe, to sink, faint, be dejected."

Donnegan, "*Baptizo*, to immerse repeatedly into a liquid, to submerge, to soak thoroughly, to saturate; *hence:* to drench with wine. *Met:* to confound totally, to dip in a vessel and draw. *Bebaptismai*, to be immersed."

Robinson, (Professor at Andover, a Presbyterian Seminary.) "*Baptizo*, to wash, perform ablution, cleanse. To baptise, immerse, administer the rite of baptism, spoken of the religious institution of that name. *Metaph:* to overwhelm, oppress, &c."

The primary meaning attached to *Baptizo* by each of these Lexicographers, is to immerse. They indeed speak of washing, cleansing and purifying. But this is only in a secondary sense, and only as a consequence of immersion. *Baptizo* does not refer to the cleansing or purifying process, but it refers entirely to mode. When an object is washed or cleansed by being dipped or immersed, *Baptizo* is used. But when it is washed by sprinkling, or pouring, or in any other way, *Baptizo* is never used. No passage has been found in the Classics which countenances such a supposition—and while we respect the opinions of Lexicographers, our ultimate appeal is to the language itself. Here we plant ourselves, and here we stand or fall. While therefore we admit that *baptizo* may be used in reference to a washing that is performed by immersion, we deny that it is used in reference to any other kind of washing. I am convinced of the truth of the position taken by one of the most eminent wri-

ters on this subject; *baptizo*, he declares, "*always signifies to dip; never expressing anything but mode.*"* The three New Testament Lexicographers, Schleusner, Wahl, and Bretschneider, limit baptism, as a sacred ordinance, to immersion.

A great many Greek works on various subjects are still extant. In these works *Baptizo* is used frequently—and it is always used with one meaning, to plunge, or to immerse. I have indeed heard of one passage, which persons, unacquainted with the language have quoted, and said that *Baptizo* there means to sprinkle. But they are mistaken, as I will proceed to show you. The passage to which I refer is taken from a work ascribed to Homer, and contains an account of a frog which was killed in a battle with some mice, and fell into a lake. The passage reads thus, *Kappese d'oud anepneusen, ebapteto d'aimati limne porphureo*, and this is the translation of it; "he fell, and breathed no more, and the lake was tinged with purple blood." Now it so happens that the word here used is not *baptizo*, but *bapto*. I have already shown that the term *bapto* means *to dip* or *to dye*, and that it is entirely distinct from *baptizo*. It is therefore particularly unfortunate that our friends have pitched upon this passage to sustain their views, for it has no connexion with the subject. And when it is brought forward in favor of sprinkling, you may rest assured that he who introduces it is profoundly ignorant of the language.

It is sometimes said that if the sacred writers intended to teach that immersion was the only mode of administering the ordinance, they would have used some other word, in the place of *Baptizo*. And pray, what is that word? They tell us *dupto*. But this is a mistake. *Dupto* is derived from *dumi* or *duo*, which is a neuter verb. It means properly to dive, and not to immerse. It is an act that I perform as it regards myself, and not an act that I perform upon another. I can very properly say that I will plunge or immerse a man—but I cannot say that I will dive him. Such a use of the word is a perversion of language, and therefore ridiculous.

I have stated that Greek writers always use *Baptizo*, as meaning to immerse; and I now proceed to furnish some references to Greek writers, in proof of this assertion.

Polybius, vol. iii, page 311, applies the word to soldiers passing

* This is the ground taken by Dr. Carson in his immortal work on baptism—a work which for acuteness of criticism, and for the soundness of its logical deductions, is unsurpassed. The author is not aware that any attempt has been made to reply to Dr. Carson—and his work stands, an enduring monument of the genius and learning of its author, of his abilities as a Philologist, and of the unquestionable truth of his positions.

through water, "*immersed* (*baptizomenoi,*) *up to the breast.*" This could mean neither sprinkling nor pouring—they were immersed or plunged up to the breast.

Strabo, Book xiv, page 982, applies the word to soldiers marching a whole day through the tide, (*baptizomenon,*) *baptised up to the middle.*

Porphyry, page 282, represents the sinner as baptised up to his head, in the Styx, a celebrated river in hell. (*Baptizetai mekri kephales.*) If this does not mean immersion, there is no meaning in it.

Strabo speaking of a rivulet in the southern part of Cappadocia, informs us that the waters are so buoyant that an arrow thrown in, will hardly sink, or be dipped, (*baptizesthai,*) into them.

Josephus, in his History of the Jewish wars, Book ii, page 752, says of a man who murdered himself, that he dipped or plunged the sword up to the hilt, (*ebaptise,*) in his own bowels.

The same writer, Book ix, page 285, speaking of a ship about to sink, says that it was about to be baptised, (*baptizesthai.*) What was the mode of this baptism?

Dio, page 84, applies the word to the sinking of ships. "So great a storm suddenly arose through the whole country, that the boats were baptised or sunk, (*baptisthenai,*) in the Tiber."

Diodorus Siculus, Book 1, page 33, applies the word to the sinking of beasts carried away by a river. "The most of the land animals being caught by the river, sinking, or being baptised, (*baptizomena*) perish; but some escaping to the higher grounds are saved."

Themistius, Oration iv, page 133, speaks of a man who sinks at sea, as being baptised, (*baptisai.*)

Heraclides Allegor says, "When a piece of iron is taken red hot from the fire, it is plunged, (*baptizetai,*) into the water.

Plutarch, vol. x, page 18, speaks of a man plunging himself, (*baptizon,*) into the Lake Copias.

In the Septuagint, 2 Kings, v chap. 14 verse, the language in reference to Naaman is, *Kai katebe Naiman, kai ebaptisato en to Iordane eptakis.* "Naaman went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan." The signification of this is evident—nothing but immersion can be meant.

Now how supremely ridiculous it would be to speak of sprinkling a ship into the sea, or sprinkling an arrow into the river, or sprinkling a piece of red hot iron into the water, or sprinkling a man into a lake, or into a river! Such language as this would excite a smile of contempt upon the face of every man of common sense. And I will leave you to determine whether it is at all less ridiculous to sprinkle a little water into the face of a man, and say that he is baptised.

I might furnish many other quotations from Greek writers,* all substantiating my position. But the time will not admit of my doing so, and I have already quoted enough to show the meaning of the word. According to these writers *baptizo* means to immerse. This is its literal signification. When used figuratively, it means to overwhelm. I have been thus particular on this part of the subject, because I have been requested to instruct the people as to the meaning of the Greek word, and because it has been said in a sermon on baptism, recently preached in this section of country, that "Mr. FURMAN, of Cheraw, has said that *baptizo* means only to immerse, and has challenged the world to disprove it." My hearers, this is literally true. I have said it, and I say it again. In Cheraw I challenged the world, and here at Cedar Creek I stand up in the cause of truth, and I again challenge the world to disprove what I have said. I call upon this vast multitude to bear witness to what I now say. I am but a worm of the dust—unworthy to plead in so good a cause. But in the name of my God and Redeemer, I am willing to appear before the world. It is the cause of truth and righteousness for which I plead. I may fall, but the truth shall stand. I may die, but the truth shall live forever. With the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, I have nothing to fear from the greatest champions of infant sprinkling—and the sling of Gospel truth, though wielded by never so weak a hand, will bring Goliath to the dust. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." This weak and infirm body will soon return to its kindred dust—but the truth for which I plead, is destined to triumph even in this world, and to live beyond the boundaries of time in immortal freshness and beauty!

Another strong argument in our favor is that, the Greeks, to the present day, believe in, and practise immersion. The New Testament, as you have been already informed, was first written in their language—consequently they, of all men upon earth, ought to understand best the import of the Greek text. A gentleman from the United States once asked a learned man in Greece the signification of *baptizo*. He replied that it meant *baptizo*. The American requested an explanation. The Greek then declared that he knew of no meaning to *baptizo*, but one, and that was *to immerse*. The candidates for baptism, in the Greek Church are always immersed.†

* The reader who is disposed to enquire still farther into the subject, is referred to CARSON'S work on baptism, page 78—134, where it is thoroughly discussed—the distinctive difference between *bapto*, and *baptizo* is clearly shown—and the meaning of *baptizo* is definitely and forever settled.

† Wall's Hist. Infant Baptism, Vol. ii, page 376.

And when they are informed that there are many persons in this country, and in other countries, who sprinkle and pour, instead of immersing, they ridicule the thought. The Nestorian christians in Mesopotamia, the Armenians, the Jacobites, the Copts, the Abyssinians, and the Georgians, all practise immersion.* Bossuet, a distinguished French preacher, and a Pedo-baptist, declares that for thirteen hundred years after Christ, immersion was the mode of administering baptism all over the Christian world, except in cases of necessity, when sprinkling and pouring were resorted to. Dr. Wall, the celebrated champion of Pedo-baptism, asserts that no branch of the Christian Church has changed immersion into sprinkling, but the Roman Catholic Church, and those Churches which have derived their sprinkling from that source.† Here you have the origin of sprinkling. An Episcopalian, not a Baptist, informs you that it has sprung from the Roman Catholic Church; and they derived it only from the traditions of their fathers. Where is the Pedo-baptist who does not become ashamed of sprinkling—the offspring of such a parent! Oh, are you not willing this day to forsake the ceremony of man's appointment, and to return to the truth of God, and the ordinance of the Gospel?

I can inform you in a few words, how sprinkling came to be thought of, and to be practised amongst christians generally. Two or three hundred years after Christ the christian church had become more or less corrupt—errors and abominations crept in—false doctrines prevailed—and amongst others the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, a belief in baptism as a regenerating and saving ordinance. Consequently when persons were taken suddenly sick, it was thought that if they could be baptised they would be saved. Sometimes they were too ill to be immersed, and in such cases, pouring or sprinkling was regarded as a valid baptism. The same motives induced parents to sprinkle their children, who were weak and infirm. They gradually got into the habit of sprinkling themselves—until finally sprinkling prevailed all over the Catholic Church, and those Churches which, as Dr. Wall asserts, have derived their sprinkling from that source. The first law for sprinkling was obtained from Pope Stephen II, by the monks of Cressy, in the year 753.‡ It is therefore a tradition of the Roman Church.

All readers of Ecclesiastical History know that a little upwards of three hundred years ago, the various Reformed Pedo-baptist Churches separated from the Church of Rome. Luther, the morn-

* Hinton's Hist. Baptism, page 130.

† Hist. Infant Baptism, Part ii, I chap., ix.

‡ Edinburgh Cyclopædia, Art. Baptism.

ing star of the Reformation—and Melancthon, and Zwingle, and Calvin, and Cranmer, and Knox, and all the master spirits of that glorious age, were brought up Roman Catholics. The Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, and the Presbyterian Church, were formed of Catholic materials. About a hundred years ago, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, and some others, who were Episcopalians, formed the Methodist Church—and hence it is called to this day, the Methodist Episcopal Church. These various Churches are therefore sprung either directly or remotely from the Roman Catholic Church. At the time of the Reformation they broke the fetters of Popery, and nobly proclaimed the glorious doctrines of the Cross. But the triumph which truth then achieved, was not complete. These Churches are still agreed in the practice of sprinkling, which is authorised *solely* by the traditions of the Church of Rome. Oh, my Pedo-baptist Brethren, would to God, your eyes were opened upon this subject! You are, *unintentionally*, upholding an anti christian church by adhering to one of its favorite institutions. If you will only abandon infant sprinkling, which is the main pillar of Popery, the downfall of that Hierarchy will be hastened—Babylon, the mother of abominations and of harlots, which has drunk the blood of ten thousand saints and martyrs, will totter and fall from her lofty throne—and the Gospel of Christ will extend its mild and gentle triumphs from the river to the ends of the earth.

The admissions of eminent Pedo-baptists, as to the meaning of *baptizo*, as to the custom of the first Church, and as to the *origin* of sprinkling, must surely be regarded as a strong argument in favor of Baptist views. Candid and learned men of all denominations have always admitted that the Baptists are right in contending for immersion, as the original mode of administering christian baptism. Our opponents themselves are the judges, and they are *obliged* to admit that we are right. The question may arise, Why then do they practise sprinkling and pouring? They satisfy themselves as the great Calvin did, with the belief that the Church may change the mode of the ordinance, so that its substance is retained. The fallacy of this argument I shall endeavor to expose in its proper place. I now ask for special attention, while I refer to the testimony of some eminent men,—*all of them Pedo-baptists*. And this testimony I regard as the best that can be adduced, excepting the testimony of the word of God.

John Calvin.* "The word baptise signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."

* Institutes, Lib. v, chap. xv.

Luther.* "The term baptism is a Greek word. It may be rendered a dipping, when we dip something in water, that it may be entirely covered with water; and therefore the *manner* of baptism should correspond with the *meaning* of baptism."

Beza.† "Christ commanded us to be baptised, by which word it is certain immersion is meant."

Salmasius.† "Baptism is immersion, and was administered in ancient times according to the force and meaning of the word."

Bossuet.† "To baptise signifies to plunge, as is granted by all the world."

Archbishop Tillotson.† "Anciently those who were baptised, were immersed and buried in the water, to represent their death to sin—and then did rise up again out of the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life."

Dr. Mede.† "There was no such thing as sprinkling used in baptism in the apostles' days, nor for many ages after them."

Dr. Campbell.† "The word baptise both in sacred writers and classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse."

Mosheim, the great Ecc. Historian, "The sacrament of baptism was administered in this, (the second century,) without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font." See Hist. Cent. II. part II. chap. iv.

Bossuet. "We read not in Scripture that baptism was otherwise performed than by plunging—and we are able to make it appear, by the acts of councils, and by the ancient rituals, that for 1300 years baptism was thus administered throughout the whole church, as far as was possible." Stennett against Russen, page 175—176.

The celebrated Dr. Whitby, in his notes on Romans vi, 4, says, "it being so expressly declared here that we are buried with Christ in baptism, by being buried under water."

Dr. Wall. "It is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages that immersion was the original mode of administering the ordinance, that one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of Pedo-baptists who deny it." Hist. Infant Baptism, Part II. page 462.

Bretschneider's Theology, Vol. I, page 684. "The apostolic church baptised only by immersion."

Rheinwald's Archæology, page 303. "Immersion was the original, apostolical practice."

* Luth. Op. Vol. I, p. 336.

† Quoted in the Bap. Memorial for 1843, page 73.

Hahn's Theology, page 556. "According to apostolical instruction and example, baptism was performed by immersing the whole man."

Starck's History of Baptism, page 8. "In regard to the mode there can be no doubt that it was not by sprinkling, but by immersion."

Whitefield in his sermon on Romans vi, 3, 4, says, "It is certain that in the words of our text, there is an allusion to the manner of baptism, which was by immersion."

Dr. Bloomfield in his critical notes on Romans vi, 4, says, "There is here plainly a reference to the ancient mode of baptism by immersion; and I agree with Koppe and Rosenmuller that there is reason to regret it should have been abandoned in most christian churches, especially as it has so evidently a reference to the mystic sense of baptism."

Professor Stuart declares, "that it is a thing made out that immersion was the ancient practice." Biblical Repository, for 1833.

Dr. Chalmers, (of the Presbyterian Church,) the most popular living preacher, and distinguished as a theological writer—says in his Lectures on Romans vi, "The original meaning of the word baptism is immersion"—"we doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the apostle's days, was an actual submerging of the whole body under water."

Mr. John Wesley, who will be regarded as an excellent witness by many here present, says "Mary Welsh aged eleven days was baptised *according to the custom of the first church*, and the rule of the church of England, by immersion." Wesley's Works, Vol. 3, page 20.

The same writer, in his notes on Romans vi, 4, says "*Buried with him*, alluded to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."*

I have stated that sprinkling was first used in the cases of the sick —and I now proceed to furnish the proof.

* The author is aware that attempts have been made by some to deny, and by others to explain away these admissions of Wesley. But all such attempts are of no avail. It matters not what Wesley says in other parts of his writings. In the passages referred to, he declares *positively* and *unequivocally*, that *immersion was the custom of the first Church—and that buried with him, alludes to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.* Wesley has long been in his grave, and it is now too late to deny, to alter, or to explain away, what he has himself asserted, without adding the slightest qualification in connection with these declarations.

Salmasius. "The clinics only, because they were confined to their beds, were baptised in a manner of which they were capable—not in the entire laver, as those who plunge the head under water, but the whole body had water poured upon it." Apud Witsium, Oecon. Foed. L. iv, c. xvi.

Pamelius. "Whereas the sick, by reason of their illness, could not be immersed, (which properly speaking is to be baptised,) they had the salutary water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it." Apud Forbesium, Instruct. Hist. Theo. L. x, C. v.

Grotius. "The custom of pouring or sprinkling seems to have prevailed in favor of those who were dangerously ill, and were desirous of giving themselves to Christ—whom others called clinics." Poole's Synopsis on Matt. iii, 6.

Van Coellen. "Baptism was by immersion: *only in cases of the sick* was it administered by sprinkling. It was held necessary to salvation, except in cases of martyrdom." Hist. Theol. Opinions, vol. I, page 459.

Rheinwald. "Baptism was administered by immersion, only in cases of necessity by sprinkling." Christian Archæology, page 302.

Stroth's Eusebius. "Baptism was administered to those on beds of sickness, by sprinkling and pouring, in other cases it was at that time by immersion." Vol. I, page 506.

In the English Episcopal Prayer Book, they are commanded to dip the child—but if it is certified that it is weak or infirm, they are then permitted to sprinkle and pour. See English Prayer Book.

Du Fresne's Latin Glossary, on the word *clinici*. "From the custom of baptising by pouring or sprinkling the sick, who could not be immersed, (which is properly baptism,) was introduced the custom which now prevails in the Western Church."

Neander. "Only with the sick was there an exception," in regard to immersion. Vol. I, page 361.

Geisler. "For the sake of the sick the rite of sprinkling was introduced." Geisler's Ch. Hist. vol. ii, page 274.

From the testimony of these witnesses, it appears that immersion was practised in the ancient church, and that sprinkling was introduced for the sake of the sick, from a mistaken opinion as to the regenerating and saving influence of baptism. What more could we possibly ask for than this? It is an unanswerable vindication of the truth. Our cause is triumphant, my Brethren. Our opponents themselves are the judges, and they admit all that we would ask, all that we could desire. Here we have the united testimony of Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, and Roman Catholics. They cannot deny the truth. They are obliged to admit it. With a voice louder and longer than a thousand thunders, they cry

out, "immersion, immersion, immersion!!"—and that voice will continue to cry, until infant sprinkling is torn from its popish foundations, crumbles into the dust, lies exposed in all its hideousness and deformity, and is swept as with a besom of destruction from the face of the world!

There is a historical fact of importance, frequently lost sight of, in discussions on the subject of baptism—and it is this, *the existence of fonts and baptisteries in ancient churches.* It seems that they began to be erected some time in the third century. The object of their erection was to afford facilities, in large towns, and cities, for baptising, which was then done by immersion. "Baptisteries," says Mr. Robinson in his History of Baptism, "are first to be sought where they are first wanted, in towns and cities; for writers of unquestionable authority affirm, that the primitive christians continued to baptise in rivers, pools, and baths, till about the middle of the third century. At this time baptisteries began to be built."* Will any advocate of sprinkling presume to say that these fonts, and baptisteries—these large reservoirs of water were built to afford conveniences for sprinkling? Surely not. And I agree with a respectable writer in the following sentiment, "I take the fact to be established, so far as the history of baptisteries bears upon the point, which it does with irresistible force, that the practice of dipping was not only usual, but considered necessary, except in particular cases arising from danger of death, or other special circumstances, for thirteen centuries after Christ, throughout all countries where any form of Christianity existed." Hinton's History of Baptism, page 182.

From the considerations presented, I think it evident that history, and true criticism are in favor of immersion, as the primitive mode of administering the christian ordinance. We now proceed to notice some passages in the New Testament, in which baptism is spoken of. And let us begin with the baptism of John.

It is sometimes denied that the baptism of John was christian baptism—and it seems that the argument, mainly insisted on, in this section of country, in favor of such a position, is drawn from the xixth chap. of Acts; where, (it is affirmed,) "Paul rebaptised certain disciples, *because* they had submitted to John's baptism, which was not valid." The correctness of this affirmation, I deny. There is no positive proof that they were actually rebaptised. It is not at all impossible, nor improbable, that the 5th verse is the lan-

* See Robinson's Hist. Baptism, page 58, where he refers to the following learned writers on the subject of baptisteries, Paullus Paciadius, Walafidius Strabo, Joan Durant, Josephus Vicecomes, Bingham, &c., &c.

guage of Paul, in reference to those who heard the preaching of John. In the 4th verse he says, "John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." And then, in the next verse he says, (as I maintain,) respecting the people who came to John, "When they heard this they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus." The sacred writer adds, in the 6th verse, "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them." Learned men differ in their views on this passage. Some think that these disciples were rebaptised, and others that they were not. The language may be construed either way.*

But even if we admit that these disciples were baptised again, it will not destroy the validity of John's baptism. When Paul met them he enquired whether they had received the Holy Ghost. They replied, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." It seems, then, that they had received no instruction in reference to this matter. John had long since been put to death. They had been baptised, in all probability, by some of his disciples, who had failed to impart that instruction which, we are taught, John gave to the multitudes who sought his baptism. In the iii chap. of Matthew, 11th verse, John said to the people, "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptise you *with the Holy Ghost*, and with fire." Here it is evident that John taught the people respecting the effusions of the Holy Ghost. The disciples mentioned in the xix of Acts, declared that *they had never heard of a Holy Ghost*—and it is therefore certain, that, if they were baptised again, it was not because of the invalidity of John's baptism, but it was because they had not been properly instructed by John's disciples, who baptised them in the first instance.

The limits of this discourse will not permit me to go into the argument, and I am therefore compelled only to throw out a few considerations, tending to show the identity of christian baptism with the baptism of John. John came as the forerunner of Christ. He preached unto the people that they should repent of their sins, and believe on Him who was to come, that is, on Christ. And hence his baptism is styled the baptism of repentance. Christ says,

* Since delivering this discourse the author has been happy to find his views advocated by so able and learned a Pedo-baptist Divine as Calvin. He says, "For myself, I grant that the baptism they had received, was the true baptism of John, and the very same with the baptism of Christ; *but I deny that they were baptised again.*" Calvin's Institutes, vol. ii, page 133.

(Matt. xi, 12, 13.) "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." This clearly teaches us that John came as the harbinger of a new dispensation—and *that* could have been no other than the dispensation of the Gospel. The dispensation of the law and the prophets was at an end, and John preached repentance, and baptised, pointing to a Divine Redeemer, who was speedily to make his appearance. Mark introduces his Gospel with these words, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God." He then adverts to the prophecies respecting John, and proceeds to describe his appearance in the wilderness, his preaching repentance, and his baptising the people in the river Jordan. The inference to which we are naturally led, is that John was sent to prepare and open the way for the Christian dispensation—and that the baptism of John was in reality, the beginning of christian baptism. In Acts, chap. xviii, verse 25, we have an account of Apollos, a converted Jew, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. "This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, *knowing only the baptism of John.*" It appears that Apollos became an able and faithful minister of the New Testament. But there is no account of his ever being rebaptised—and this is satisfactory evidence that the baptism of John which was the only baptism he had known, was regarded by the apostles as valid.

Matthew introduces to us the forerunner of Christ, in these words, "In those days came John the Baptist." This language is definite and expressive—It is not *John the Sprinkler*, nor *John the Pourer*—but it is *John the Baptist.* The expression in Greek is *Ioannes 'o Baptistes*—and the correct translation is, John *the Immerser.* In the German translation of the Bible it is rendered *der Tauffer, the Dipper.*

"Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptised of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matt. iii, 5, 6.) This is plain language. They could not be sprinkled in Jordan; they could not be poured in Jordan. How then were they baptised? They were simply immersed. The people came, and were immersed, or plunged by John in Jordan. This makes sense of the passage, and it can have no other meaning.

"John also was baptising in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there; and the people came and were baptised." (John iii, 23.) Here is a text that has ever stood forth in bold relief, notwithstanding all the false interpretations that have been heaped

upon it. Our Pedo-baptist friends have generally contended that much water was needed for the camels, and other animals of those who resorted to the baptism of John. But the text tells us nothing about camels. The Evangelist is speaking *not about animals*, but about baptism. We do not know whether the people who went to be baptised by John, carried any animals with them. But suppose we admit that they did—If much water was needed for the animals, much corn and provender were also necessary—for it is evident that they could not live upon water alone. And yet the scriptures are silent upon this point. It is therefore a gratuitous assumption—and it only shows to what an absurd refuge the advocates of error will resort, in the absence of argument. John baptised in Enon. Why? *Because there was much water there.* Why was much water needed? In order that he might immerse the people. I cannot conceive how a candid and conscientious man can interpret the language above quoted in any other way.

In the third chapter of Matthew, we have an account of the baptism of Christ. John administered the ordinance on that memorable occasion—and our Redeemer, by submitting to the baptism of his forerunner, clearly and unequivocally proclaimed its validity. If Christ was satisfied with the baptism of John, it is certainly incompatible with christian humility, and with the reverence due to the Son of God, for us to raise questions, and to entertain doubts respecting it.

It is affirmed by some, that Christ submitted to baptism, in compliance with a custom that prevailed amongst the Jews, of washing their priests—and not as an example for his followers. This is the *theory* of Adam Clarke—and his advocacy of it has given it extensive prevalence in the denomination of which he was a member. It is the offspring of a vigorous imagination—it is a *theory* totally destitute of proof—and it is equally repugnant to the Scriptures, and dishonoring to the Son of God. He was not a priest after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedec. He was not descended from the tribe of Levi, but from the tribe of Judah. He therefore did not belong to the family of the priests; and it would have been a violation of the ceremonial law for him to have partaken of any of the ceremonies peculiar to the Levitical priesthood. The Jewish priests were indeed washed when they were inducted into office, and also *when they came near to the altar to minister.* (See Exodus xxx, 20.) And why were they thus washed? "*That they die not.*" Here was the reason. They were themselves frail and infirm men. They needed an atonement for their *own* sins, and in token thereof they were washed. But Jesus had no guilt to wash away. He was the pure and spotless Lamb, "who taketh

away the sins of the world." And when he entered upon his ministry as the Great Head of the Church, it was entirely inconsistent with the dignity of his character, and with the principles of his Gospel, for him to receive the washing of a Jewish priest!! But the word of God settles this matter. "He is made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedec." We nowhere read that Melchizedec was washed. And why should Jesus be?—"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken, pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah: of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedec, there ariseth another priest, who is made, *not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.*" (Hebrews vii, 12 to 16th.) The apostle then proceeds to say that those priests were made without an oath; but this Priest with an oath, for the Lord sware, "Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedec." Here the distinction is clearly marked. Christ is the High Priest of God—as such he had nothing to do with the ceremonial rites of the House of Levi—and the *theory* of Dr. CLARKE contradicts the Scriptures, and dishonors and degrades the incarnate Redeemer, by making him a priest after the order of Aaron!

If it be asked, why Jesus was baptised? I answer, that he might set an example for his people. He instituted baptism as the rite of initiation into the christian church—and when he was baptised he said, "thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." It is sometimes said "that Christ is not a proper example for us—he is so pure, so perfect, that it is impossible for us to imitate him." I admit that we can never, never, attain to anything like the perfection of *his* character, and the purity of *his* life—and yet *he is our example.* Christians are called his disciples. They are commanded to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow him. And Peter expressly declares, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps." (First Peter ii, 21.) As a denomination we have never laid claims to *christian perfection*—but we have always believed that the Son of God is the great Exemplar of christians—and although we fall short of the mark, and *never* imitate him as we should, we rejoice that we are enabled *to follow him into the water*, to be buried with him, in baptism; and thus to proclaim to the world, our veneration for his example.

"And Jesus when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water." (Matt. iii, 16.) I have never yet met with the man who presumed to say that Christ was sprinkled or poured—and with

this passage staring him in the face, I tremble for that man who dares to make such an assertion. "He went up straightway out of the water." This clearly implies that he went down into the water. For what purpose did he go down into the water? To have a little of it sprinkled into his face, or poured upon his head? This is absurd—and those who *will*, *may* believe it. I put the question to your hearts and consciences this day, and ask, in the name of the Lord, how dare you to give such an unmeaning interpretation to his holy word? Of all the hundreds and thousands, in this country, and in other countries who have been sprinkled or poured upon, not one, (within my knowledge,) has gone down into the water to have it done. And why should it be said that the Saviour did? Away with such pitiful quibbling! away with such a barefaced and child-like trifling with the word of God!! See your meek and lowly Lord descending into the baptismal stream, and bowing beneath the wave, "an emblem of his future grave." After his immersion, behold him coming "up straightway out of the water"—and then, Oh believer, "why tarriest thou? arise and be baptised."

The language in Acts ii, 41, is often quoted as though it favored the views of those who practise sprinkling. "Then they that gladly received the word, were baptised, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Now it is thought that there would have been some difficulty in immersing so many in the course of a single day. But this difficulty exists only in the imaginations of our Pedo-baptist Brethren. It requires no longer time to immerse men and women than is consumed in the sprinkling of babes. "I speak that I do know, and I testify that I have seen." Some, in an indiscreet zeal, have invented a huge broom for the use of the administrator on the occasion under consideration. Standing on the margin of the stream he is supposed to have dipped his besom into the water, and after pronouncing the baptismal words, to have waved it over the heads of the surrounding multitude! *And this was baptism!* Alas, alas! when we abjure the plain meaning of the word of God, into what mazes of inconsistency, and absurdity are we destined to wander! A letter has been recently written by a Baptist minister, in which he states that he immersed thirty-two persons in a little more than seven minutes. He then enters into a calculation and shows that, in the same ratio, he could have immersed the three thousand in ten hours. But there is no use for such a construction as this. There were twelve apostles, besides seventy disciples sent forth to preach the Gospel. If only the twelve apostles baptised, they could have immersed the three thousand in the course of one or two hours. But if in addition to them, the seventy also baptised, the immersion of that great multitude could

have been easily accomplished in from ten to twenty minutes. It is therefore to be hoped that this passage will never again be mentioned, when sprinkling is advocated.

In Acts viii, 38, 39, is contained the account of the baptism of the Eunuch. When the Eunuch professed faith in Christ, and Philip consented to baptise him, "he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch: and he baptised him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the Eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing." This language needs neither note nor comment. It cannot be made plainer—It explains itself, and *it will preach immersion to the end of time.* If it be objected, as it sometimes is, that the Greek prepositions *eis* and *ek* are here improperly translated, *into* and *out of:* I reply first, that the English bible is not a Baptist version. It was translated by Pedo-baptists—under the influence, and *according to the directions,** of a Pedo-baptist king, who was strongly in favor of sprinkling, and endeavored to promote it in his dominions. These translators indeed *transferred* the Greek word *baptizo*, and thus left it without its English meaning. But when they came to the baptism of the Eunuch, they could not do violence to their consciences by *mis*translating the Greek prepositions—it was necessary for them to say either what was true, or what was false—and like candid and honest men, they gave to each word its proper signification—*eis*, into: *ek*, out of. But again; these prepositions are not only thus rendered by Pedo-baptist translators, but it would be contrary to their proper and primary signification, for them to be rendered in any other way, in the connection in which they are here used. If *eis* does not signify *into*, and *ek*, *out of*, then no words will be found in the Greek language to convey these ideas. But I will refer to unexceptionable testimony. "*Eis*—the primitive meaning of this preposition is *into*, and hence it takes the accusative, this case expressing that towards which anything approaches or tends, and *into* which it *enters*, or *penetrates*." "*Ek*—this preposition, in its original meaning, is employed only in reference to such objects as proceed from the *interior* of another object, or from the most intimate connection with it." (Anthon's edition of Valpy's Greek Grammar, page 206, 209.) Anthon's Valpy is a standard work—and all Grammarians and Lexicographers of note, will be found to agree in the views above expressed. The use of *eis* and *ek* in the Classic writers, clearly fixes their meaning, and abundant examples might be adduced to show that they signify literally and

* Thomas Fuller's Church Hist. of Britain, Book x, page 46.

properly, *into*, and *out of*. It is evident then, that the Eunuch went down *into* the water--that he was *immersed*, (if *baptizo* means only to immerse, as I think I have proved)--and that after his immersion he came up *out of* the water. May the Lord open your eyes to see, your ears to hear, and your hearts to receive the truth which is here so plainly taught!

It is believed by many that the baptism of the Jailer, (Acts xvi, 33,) was administered in his house. But a careful examination of the scriptural account of that event, will lead to a different conclusion. When the Jailer was awakened by the earthquake, he sprang into the prison with a light, and brought out the prisoners. Paul and Silas spake the word of the Lord unto him, and to all that were *in his house;* he then washed their stripes; and after baptism had been performed, he brought them *into his house*, and set meat before them, &c. From this statement it appears that they were first brought out of the prison into the house, where they preached to the family. And inasmuch as they returned into the house after the baptism, it is a very natural inference that they went out for the purpose of attending to that ordinance.

In Mark vii, 4, *baptizo* is used. "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft eat not, holding the traditions of the elders. And when they come from the market except they wash they eat not." The word first used here is *nipto*, to wash by rinsing or pouring—the second is *baptizo*, to wash by bathing, or immersing. The former is confined to the washing of the hands--the latter seems to refer to the bathing or immersion of the whole body. The Jews regarded themselves as polluted when they returned from market, and it was natural for them to resort to the bath for purification. I here give the testimony of Maimonides, an old and learned Jewish writer, as quoted by Lightfoot in his Com. on Matt. iii, 6—"Wheresoever in the law, washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means nothing else than the washing of the whole body. For if any wash himself all over, except the very top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness." In the latter part of the verse we are considering, Mark says that the Pharisees hold "the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." *Bap'ismos* is the word that occurs in the Greek text, and it ought to be translated *immersion*. I again appeal to the testimony of Maimonides, as quoted by Dr. Gill on this passage--"In a laver they dip all unclean vessels. If he dips the bed in the pool, although the feet are plunged in the thick clay at the bottom of the pool, it is clean." This is a satisfactory explanation of these verses--and it also explains Mark vii, 8, and Hebrews ix, 10.

Let us now direct our attention to some cases of the figurative use of baptism in the new Testament. And first, the baptism spoken of in 1st Corinthians x, 1, 2. "Moreover brethren I would not ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea." The opposers of immersion attempt to give these verses such an interpretation as to make them mean that the people were sprinkled by the cloud and the sea. But such an interpretation destroys the beauty of the figure, and is an evident perversion of its meaning. The Israelites, when they departed from the land of Egypt, were eagerly pursued by the Egyptians. In their hasty flight they approached the Red Sea, which lay in their way, and opposed their progress. But at the command of Moses the waters separated, and a path was opened through the very depths of the Sea. The children of Israel descended into the deep. The waters arose like walls on their two sides—the cloud spread over them like a broad and impenetrable canopy—and they were emphatically *buried* from the sight of the Egyptians. And this was a figurative immersion, my Brethren. They were immersed in the cloud, and in the sea—and yet they passed through dry-shod. Do you ask, how this was possible? I reply, they went down to the depths, the very bottom of the Sea—the waters surrounded them—but the baptism, *the immersion*, was not complete until the cloud overshadowed them—and then they were entirely concealed from the sight of mortal men. Here is a most beautiful figure, and here is an illustrious type of christian baptism.

In Luke xii, 50, the Saviour says, "I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." He here had reference to the sufferings through which he was to pass. Now what a poor and inadequate conception of those sufferings would the figure of sprinkling give us! Suppose he had said, "I have a sprinkling of sufferings to be sprinkled with." Where would have been the force, where would have been the propriety, where would have been the meaning of such language as this? If it conveyed any meaning at all, it would have been this that he had but very little to endure—*He was only to be sprinkled with a sprinkling of sufferings!* But how different the meaning when the language is varied—"I have an immersion of sufferings to be immersed, or overwhelmed with." This figure presents the most vivid picture of the sufferings of Jesus. He was plunged in grief; he was overwhelmed with woe. And when an immersion of sufferings is spoken of, we know what it means. We have immediately before our eyes his sufferings in the garden, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood—and his overwhelming agonies upon the cross;—when

his groans shook the foundations of the world; when the rocks were rent throughout the vast dominions of nature; when darkness, deep and gloomy, brooded over the face of the world; when the vail of the temple was rent in twain, and the bodies of the dead awoke from their long slumbers; when the angelic host looked down upon Calvary in silent sorrow; when the cruel spear was thrust into his side; when he bowed his head, and in all the agonies of the dying struggle, exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We are ready to say with the christian poet,

"Oh Lamb of God, was ever grief,
Was ever love like thine?"

In view of all this, is there a man in this vast assembly who will stand up and say that Christ was sprinkled with a sprinkling of sufferings?—If there is such an one here, I call upon him to arise and show himself. I wish to see him. He is a wonder in creation. And he ought to be held up as an everlasting spectacle to angels, to men, and to devils!

I will give you but one more example from Holy Writ. It is in Romans vi. 4, 5. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." I have often thought that if this were the only reference in the whole of the New Testament to the mode of baptism, for the life of my soul, I could not resist it—it would be enough, amply enough to make me a Baptist all the days of my life. Here we have an example of the typical meaning of baptism. It represents the believer's death to sin, and his resurrection to a new and holy life—both which are fitly and beautifully set forth by his burial under the water, and his resurrection therefrom. The apostles says, "Therefore we are buried with him"—by sprinkling? No. "Therefore we are buried with him"—by pouring? No. "Therefore we are buried with him"—by immersion? Yes, my hearers; that is plain common sense, and that is the obvious meaning of the sacred writer. "We are buried with him by *immersion* into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—What is the signification of the word bury? Does it mean to sprinkle? No. Does it mean to pour? No. Does it mean to immerse? Most unquestionably—When an object is immersed it is temporarily buried. To use a familiar illustration—If you take a coffin to a grave that has been prepared for its reception, and sprinkle upon one end of it a handful of earth,

can you say that it has been buried? Certainly not. And if you take a little water into your hand, and sprinkle it into the face of a man, can you say, with truth, that he has been buried? Reason says not—common sense says not—the world says not—and an indignant Universe would arise against you, and convict you of a gross and palpable untruth. The Bible declares that *we are buried with him by baptism:* and yet you *sprinkle* men, and women, and children, and publish to the world that they are baptised! Wonder oh heavens, and be astonished oh earth!!

Having thus endeavored to establish the signification of *baptizo*, to show the origin of sprinkling, and to present the plain teaching of the Bible, in reference to baptism—I now proceed to expose the futility of the reasons which prevent many from submitting to christian baptism.

1. A very common excuse is that the mode is not material—there is nothing in mode—and if water is applied in any way, it is baptism. This is an excuse that is offered by hundreds and thousands, who admit that immersion is the proper, and the most ancient mode. But such reasoning, however specious it may seem, is unsound. I pronounce it to be rotten at the very core, and untrue from beginning to end. In the ordinance of baptism, (so far as the administration is concerned,) mode is everything. Destroy the mode, and you destroy the baptism. I have already proved that *Baptizo* means only to immerse—consequently if you have not been immersed, you have not been baptised. There is no possible way of getting out of the difficulty. There is no authority for administering this ordinance in three different ways. The assumption that there is, is contrary to the legitimate meaning of the Greek term designating baptism—it is contrary to the practice of the Apostles, as recorded in the New Testament, and in ancient ecclesiastical history—and it is contrary to the frequent allusions made by the sacred writers to the symbolical meaning of baptism. An Apostle declares that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism"—and if that baptism be immersion, it follows that without immersion, there is no baptism. But let us for a moment suppose that the position of our opponents is true, that the mode is not material; and see to what monstrous absurdities it will lead. One is immersed, and he is baptised—another has water poured upon him, and he is baptised—another is besprinkled, and he is baptised—another applies his foot to some water, and he is baptised—another moistens his finger in a basin, and he is baptised—another, in an unaccountable freak, applies a drop of water to the tip of his nose, and he is baptised! It makes no difference at all: there is nothing in mode: every one has a right to his own opinion as to the way of submitting to the ordinance:

and nothing more is necessary than that water should be applied in some way or other, to be determined entirely by the predilections or prejudices of individuals!—Thus you might have, not only three, but an hundred different baptisms, when the Bible declares that there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Your principles, my hearers, inevitably lead to this. They are therefore untenable and unscriptural; and they ought to be, and *must* be abandoned, sooner or later.

In controversies on this point, reference is sometimes made to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and it is maintained that as some christians celebrate that institution kneeling, and others sitting, so they may submit to baptism, either by being sprinkled or immersed. But the cases, (so far as the mode of observing the ordinances is concerned,) are by no means analogous. The illustration is therefore unhappily chosen, and proves nothing. The essence of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper consists in eating the bread, and drinking the wine. The essence of baptism consists in a burial beneath the water, and a resurrection therefrom. If an individual sits at the communion table, and takes a piece of bread, and has a little wine poured into his hand, without eating and drinking, he has not partaken of the Lord's Supper. And in like manner, although an individual has water applied to his body, in a thousand different ways, if he has not been immersed, he has not been baptised. Paul declares that "we are buried with Him"—that is, Christ—"by baptism." I therefore repeat what I have said: in the administration of baptism mode is everything. *Baptizo* means only to immerse. Candid and learned men of all denominations admit that the apostles, and the early christians practised immersion. I have proved this day, by the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses, that sprinkling originated some hundred years after Christ, and derives its authority from a law of the Roman Church. It is therefore an ordinance of man. Choose you this day which you will obey, the commandments of man, or the commandments of God. God says, "one baptism." Man says, "three baptisms." God says, "be immersed"—for that is the import of *baptizo*. Man says, "you may be immersed, or sprinkled, or poured." Here they are directly at variance. And I call upon you to determine whom you will obey, in the fear of God, and in view of that great and solemn day, when you, and I, and all mankind shall stand before the Sovereign Lord and Judge of the Universe!

2. It is objected, as I have been informed, in this region, that the Baptists by their views, *un*church all other denominations of christians. What do you mean, my hearers, by *un*churching other

christians? Do you mean to say that we deny to them the character and the claims of the children of God—that we exclude them from amongst the number of his people—and that we do not believe that they will ultimately form a part of the church triumphant in heaven? If these are your views, you are vastly mistaken. But if you mean by *un*churching them, simply to say that we deny that they have been baptised—that we deny that they have been introduced into the visible church by the proper rite of initiation—Why then it is the truth. It is scriptural truth. It is eternal truth. We would be recreant to our principles as christians, if we dared to deny it; and we would be worthy of everlasting contempt, if we were ashamed or afraid to stand before the world, and to contend for it with our latest strength, and our dying breath.

But whatever signification you are pleased to attach to the term *un*churching, it will not properly apply in the present case. It is not the Baptists who *un*church other denominations, but they *un*church themselves. We do not deny to them the privilege of obeying their Lord and Master, but they deny it to themselves. We do not prevent them from being baptised, but they prevent themselves. We are not unwilling for them to go along with us, in obedience to the commandments and ordinances of the Gospel—so far from being unwilling, we long to have their company. But they do not regard our solicitations; they turn off in another direction; they practise a ceremony which I have proved this day to be an ordinance of man. And because we dissent from, and condemn, this departure from Scriptural precept and example, you accuse us of *un*churching all other denominations of christians! The charge, you therefore perceive, is unfounded, it is uncharitable, it is unkind—and it will be made only when no better argument can be found. We respect and love our brethren of other denominations. We long for the time to come when these differences shall cease. And we rejoice in the assurance that in heaven we shall all think, and see, and feel alike. For the sake of peace and union amongst christians, I am willing to meet them on any ground, and to make any sacrifice, short of the Word of God. But as long as that is in the way, I can never, never, yield my principles, nor abandon my position as a christian, and as a Baptist. If we are ever united, we must be united in the truth—for a union not sanctified and cemented by the principles of the Gospel, can neither be acceptable to God, nor profitable to us. This is a subject that merits the serious consideration of our Pedo-baptist brethren. On the one hand, they admit that immersion, as practised by the Baptists, is right—equally valid, with any other mode. On the other hand, we contend that sprinkling and pouring, as practised by them, are wrong. Now let them abandon sprinkling

and pouring, to which *we* object—and practise immersion, to which *they* have no objection. And thus as it regards an important ordinance of the Lord's house, we can all be united, in what we all believe to be the truth. Until this point is gained, we must remain disunited; and as a denomination, I suppose we will be still charged, however unjustly, with *un*churching other christians.

3. It is frequently urged that immersion is, in some cases, a dangerous, and at all times, an indecent ordinance. As to the danger of immersion, I am so far entirely ignorant. It has been my privilege in the course of my short life, to witness the immersion of many hundreds of happy converts, and I have never seen an hair of their heads injured by the act. I have heard of thousands and tens of thousands, who have followed their Lord by immersion into the liquid grave—and I never yet have heard of one whose life has been destroyed, or endangered by that humble, and holy act. The Lord has thus stamped it with the mark of His approbation, and proclaimed to the world that it is His ordinance. There may indeed be danger connected with the immersion of a helpless infant, or of a man lying at the point of death. But as a denomination, we have never believed in baptismal regeneration—and we are firmly persuaded that baptism cannot benefit an unconscious babe, nor can it save a dying man.

As to the indecency and indelicacy of immersion, it is passing strange that such language as this should be permitted to escape from the lips of a man professing the christian religion. It may do for a skeptic or a blasphemer to use such an argument as this; but that it should be uttered by christian men, in this christian land—"tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon." Whatever God appoints, cannot be indecent: whatever God commands, cannot be indelicate; and the man who says that it is, is but a step above the blasphemer. Under the Mosaic Dispensation if a Jew had pronounced the rite of circumcision to be indecent, he would have been stoned or thrust through with a dart. And what shall become of him, who, in the clearer light of the Gospel, pronounces an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ to be indecent and indelicate? We say as the Lord did to Peter, on that day when He let down the provisions from heaven, and when Peter was disposed to regard them as common and unclean—"What the Lord hath sanctified, call not thou common, or unclean!" But this charge of indecency and indelicacy is egregiously misapplied. The ordinance of immersion is full of solemnity, of beauty, of dignity, and of sublimity. It is an appropriate emblem. It is a delightful act to the administrator, and to the candidate—and a most impressive scene to those who are assembled as spectators. I have never

witnessed that holy, heavenly, Christ-like ordinance without feelings of deep solemnity, and of joyful interest. Many are the tears that have been shed around the baptismal waters. Many impenitent sinners have been convinced of the necessity of a new and spiritual birth, thus beautifully illustrated. And many christians have had their bosoms filled with joy; and have been wont to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest!"

4. Many excuse themselves from submitting to this ordinance, because a great many good and learned men have lived and died, without ever being immersed. This is true; but it proves nothing. The fact of many good and learned men having sactioned and adopted any particular practice, does not render that practice obligatory upon us, nor does it prove it to be in accordance with the will of God. The best of men are liable to error—the best of men have erred—and if we satisfy ourselves with following their example, irrespectively of the precepts of the Gospel, the Lord only knows where our errors will end. The argument we are now considering, amounts substantially to this—A great many good and learned men have done wrong, and therefore I will do wrong. A great many good and learned men have violated the precepts of the Gospel, and therefore I will violate them. A great many good and learned men have despised an ordinance of Jesus Christ, and therefore I will despise it. A great many good and learned men have not been Baptists, and therefore I will scorn to be a Baptist. A great many good and learned men have been Quakers, and therefore I will be a Quaker. A great many good and learned men have been Roman Catholics, and therefore I will be a Roman Catholic! Now what language would this be for a christian to use! Why, my hearers, a christian in his right mind, could not utter such language. We are commanded to call no man master upon earth. One is our Master, even Christ—and we are bound only to obey His commands, and to follow His example. The moment we give up the Word of God for the doctrines of *good and learned men*, and take them for our patterns instead of Christ—that moment we renounce our allegiance to the King of heaven, we are serving man instead of the Lord, and there is every reason to fear that we shall fall into the condemnation of the devil. Are you a Baptist because Bunyan was a Baptist? Are you a Presbyterian because Calvin was a Presbyterian? Are you an Episcopalian because Wall was an Episcopalian? Are you a Methodist because Wesley was a Methodist? The Lord in mercy forbid! If this is the case with any of us, we have but little ground to hope that we shall be saved. It is not Bunyan, nor Calvin, nor Wall, nor Wesley, who is to be our

final judge—they were all men of like passions with ourselves. But we are to be judged by Jesus Christ, according to our reception or rejection of His truth, as it is revealed in the Gospel. And therefore I call upon you to forsake the traditions of men. Tear yourselves away from their skirts. Come up to the mark, as it is set before you in the Bible. Behold Christ, your glorious pattern! See the example which He has left—and then, Oh christian friend and brother, "why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised."

5. There are many christians who acknowledge that immersion is the true and scriptural mode of baptism, and who never comply with this requisition of the Gospel, because of the opinions, the wishes, and the prejudices of their relatives and friends. Such an excuse might be admissible in things pertaining to this world—but it will not, *cannot* be admitted in things pertaining to the service of God, and to that world which is to come. The bonds by which we are united to our earthly friends and connexions, last only during our continuance upon earth. It is praiseworthy, when we seek to please them, in accordance with the word of God. But when we neglect our duties to God, when we disobey the precepts of the Gospel, in order to gain their approbation, we are assuming a responsibility under which an Archangel would tremble. In matters of religion we are *personally* and *individually* responsible to God. To Him we must account for our violations of truth and duty. And by Him we shall be acquitted or condemned. The opinions and the wishes of others, will not be received in the day of judgment, as an excuse for our delinquency. The faith of the parent will not suffice for the child, nor will the faith of the child suffice for the parent. Every one must be fully persuaded in his own mind—and every one must act from his *individual* convictions of duty. In coming to a decision on this important subject, it does not become us to enquire whether our fathers were Baptists or Pedo-baptists. It does not become us to yield to the influence of early impressions and associations; it does not become us to consult the wishes and the prejudices of our most intimate relatives and friends, who, however loved and venerated they may be, are yet frail and fallible, like ourselves. The great question to be asked and answered, is this, *What is the will of the Lord?* That will is taught in the Bible. Therefore, "to the word and to the testimony"—and from the lids of this blessed volume you will learn your duty. And when you have ascertained the Divine will, there must be no hesitancy—no delay. You must run in the way of the Lord's commandments—and if it it is necessary, cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye. If you look upon baptism as a cross, and if obedience will involve grea self-denial, hesitate not to make the sacrifice; endure the self-

denial; take up the cross; and follow your Divine Redeemer through evil, as well as through good report! The Saviour says, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life, for my sake, shall find it." There have not been found wanting, men, who have made these sacrifices: who have endured the cross, despising the shame: who, after having lived many years in the neglect of duty, have been brought to acknowledge their error—have become dissatisfied with the sprinkling they received in infancy—and, contray to their early and long-cherished impressions, contrary to the wishes of their friends, contrary to their worldly interests, have followed their Saviour *down into the water of baptism.* We can point to many worthies of past generations, who have thus testified that truth was dearer to them than life. We can point to the Carsons, the Haldanes, the Judsons, the Chapins, and the Jewetts, of the present generation—whose conscientiousness will be questioned by none, whose lives are devoted to the interests of religion, and whose praise is in all the churches.* We exhort you this day, to follow their example. Yea, rather, follow the example of your Saviour! Remember what He sacrificed for you. Remember the bruised head, the bleeding hands, the wounded side. Remember Gethsemane and Calvary!—and then, if thou believest with all thine heart, "why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised!"

And now I beseech you, to consider calmly, and dispassionately, the arguments that have been presented. The word *Baptizo* is used by all the classic writers of antiquity, in *one* sense, *to plunge*, or *to immerse.* In the whole of the New Testament, *Baptizo* is the *only* word used to designate baptism. Pious and eminent men of various denominations acknowledge that the apostles immersed, and that immersion was practised by the early Church, for several hundred years. Pedo baptist writers of the greatest distinction, admit that sprinkling was introduced two or three centuries after Christ, in the cases of sick persons, who were otherwise called *clinics.* History attests the existence of Fonts and Baptisteries in ancient churches, in which candidates for baptism were immersed. There is nothing in the Scriptures that favors sprinkling, *even in the remotest sense*—on the contrary they plainly teach that baptism consists in a burial

* The Pastor of this, (the Cedar Creek) Church, now in the meridian of life, in the course of his ministry has immersed *six hundred* persons, who were at the time connected with Pedo-baptist churches. What is the meaning of this? Surely it is one of the signs of the times.

beneath the water, and a resurrection therefrom. If these things be so, Men, Brethren, and Fathers, it is evidently your duty, as the children of God, as the disciples of Christ, to arise, and be baptised. "I speak as unto wise men—judge ye." You cannot excuse yourselves from the performance of this duty, on the ground that the mode is not material—that by maintaining immersion, you will *un*church other christians—that it is dangerous and indecent—that a great many good and learned men have thought otherwise—or, that you are afraid of incurring the displeasure of those in this world, whom you ought to honor and obey. The futility of these excuses must be apparent to all. They ought not to be offered *now*, and they will not avail *hereafter*. The Lord has left us *without excuse*. Baptism He requires of all believers. It is the first act of obedience, that is to follow faith. While we live unbaptised, we live in disobedience. And if disobedient, where is the testimony that we please God? Let us all examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. And if, after a faithful and impartial self-examination, you arrive at the conclusion that you have repented of your sins, and believed in the Saviour—I call upon you to obey the injunction of the text, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised."

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—MATTHEW xxviii. 19.

It has been my privilege, this morning, to discuss the *mode* of baptism. I have endeavored to show wherein it consists; and to prove that there is but one scriptural mode, by which it is to be administered. It now becomes my duty to consider who are the proper *subjects* of this holy ordinance. Here again my brethren, there is a difference of opinion amongst professed christians. They are divided into two great classes. The one class believe that baptism is to be administered to believers, and to children: the other class believe that baptism is to be administered *only* to believers. Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, and other sects belong to the former class—the latter is composed *entirely* of Baptists. They are the little flock. They stand alone in the world. They go only to the Word of God, for their faith and practice in this matter. They utterly reject the authority of tradition, and of the church. And to a man they contend that immersion is the solitary mode of baptism, and that none are fit subjects for baptism, but those who furnish satisfactory evidence, that they have exercised repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The text which I have chosen, is an illustration of this great truth. It was the commission which Christ gave to his disciples, when He was about to ascend to heaven. He had finished the labors of his ministry upon earth. He had accomplished the work that was given him to do. His disciples were gathered around Him for the last time upon earth, to receive his blessing, and his parting instructions. And He said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them." Here you perceive that teaching was to precede baptism. The word here rendered *teach*, is in the Greek, *matheteuo*. Its signification is to instruct, to impart knowledge, so as to make disciples. It here means to impart particularly the know-

ledge of the Gospel, and of the plan of salvation: to endeavor to instil into others the principles of religion; by which they would be made the disciples of Christ, and after the reception of which, they would be prepared for christian baptism. It is worthy of remark that the Greek article used in connection with "all nations," in this text, is in a different gender from that which is used in reference to those who were to be baptized. In the former case it is *ta*, neuter, agreeing with *ethne*—in the latter case it is *tous*, masculine, agreeing with *matheteis*, or some other masculine substantive understood. The truth and force of this criticism will be apparent to all who have any acquaintance with the genius of the Greek language. The meaning of the commission then, is this, "Go ye therefore, and instruct all nations, baptising *those that become disciples*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

I shall endeavor, in the first place, to show that believers are the only fit subjects for baptism, according to the testimony of the Word of God. And it is to be regretted that all christians cannot agree to take the Bible, and the Bible *only*, for their guide in this matter. It is this want of agreement that leads to their disunion, and to all the differences and dissentions that prevail amongst them. The commission, as recorded by Mark, (chap. xvi. verses 15, 16,) is as conclusive as the language of the text, which we have already considered. The Saviour there says to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." Nothing is here said about infants, nor about their baptism; and they surely would have been mentioned in the Saviour's last command, if the christian rite was intended to be administered to them. The disciples were first to preach the Gospel. The command is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." To whom was the Gospel to be preached? Evidently to those, who were capable of receiving it. Not to infants; for they could not understand it. To whom was the ordinance of baptism to be administered? Unquestionably to those who could comprehend its design, and be prepared, by the operations of grace, for its reception—not to infants, for they could not believe; and the language expressly is, "He that believeth, and is baptised." Infants cannot believe: they cannot understand the nature, and design of baptism; and therefore it is not required at their hands. And yet we believe that through the merits of our Redeemer, and by the grace of God, provision has been made for their salvation—without any reference to their baptism. Only those who have arrived at the years of discretion, and who are capable of exercising faith, are

called upon to believe, and be baptised. If they do not believe, they "shall be damned." But if they believe, and refuse to be baptised, they are guilty of disobedience—and fail to evince their love for Christ, by not complying with one of His first requisitions. I conscientiously believe that this is a true and scriptural exposition of this portion of Divine truth; and I also believe that it will commend itself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God.

It is manifest that John the Baptist confined his baptism to adults. He preached, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "But when he saw many of the Scribes, and Pharisees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, oh generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."—"I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance." This settles the matter; and makes us acquainted with the terms on which persons were admitted to the baptism of John. He baptised those who were penitents—who repented of their sins, who confessed their sins, who forsook their sins, and whose desire it was to bring forth in their lives the fruits of repentance. Where will you find any possible plea here for infant baptism? Why, my hearers, you might as well look for the life of Buonaparte in the Gospel of Matthew, or for the history of America in the Psalms of David. If the Scriptures present any foundation for the supposition that infants were numbered amongst the persons baptised by John, then I am willing ever to bear the character of one, altogether incapable of understanding the plain meaning of language. An eminent Pedo-baptist, whose piety and learning no one will question, says, "It does not appear that any but adults were baptised by John. Adult Jews, professing repentance, and a disposition to become the Messiah's subjects, were the *only persons* whom John admitted to baptism." Scott's Comment. on Matt. iii. 5, 6. If John had received infants to his baptism, and had performed the rite by sprinkling as well as immersing—in all kindness and charity, I ask the question, Would such mighty efforts be made, in certain quarters, to *unchristianize* his baptism, and to confine him in the dark dispensation of the Law? I trow not.

How satisfactory is the account of the baptism of the three thousand, on the day of Pentecost! "Then they that gladly received the word were baptised." (Acts ii. 41.) Here you discover that baptism was not administered to persons indiscriminately. It was confined to a particular class—"they that gladly received the word." What is implied by gladly receiving the word? Can an infant gladly receive the word? Can a rebellious and impenitent sinner gladly receive the word? Certainly not. None but a hum-

ble and penitent sinner—none but a sincere and honest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, can gladly receive the word of God. And consequently the three thousand, who were baptised on the day of Pentecost, were all believers—for the Scripture saith, "*they that gladly received the word* were baptised; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

The circumstances attending the baptism of the Eunuch, are in themselves highly interesting, and have an important bearing on this discussion. (Acts viii. 27—40.) Philip had been expounding the prophecy of Isaiah, and preaching Jesus unto him. "And as they went on their way, the Eunuch said, see here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptised? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." As though he had declared, here is the condition, the necessary condition, the only condition, the eternal condition—"if thou believest with all thine heart." It is a solemn rite: it is one to which you must submit as a christian: it is one which requires a previous preparation—the preparation of a renewed heart: the vows of God will be upon you; and sad and awful will be your state, if you trifle with, and profane a holy ordinance. But "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" —it is thy privilege—it is thy duty. And the Eunuch answered, and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Here was faith—*what we Baptists require*—he believed in Jesus Christ. And when he had made this *profession of faith*, Philip led him down into the water, and baptised him in the name of the Holy Trinity. And the Eunuch, when he was baptised, went on his way rejoicing! Here is an illustrious example of *believers' baptism.*

The baptism of households is frequently urged as a scriptural argument in favor of infant baptism. If households were baptised, our friends infer that infants were amongst them. But this inference has nothing to sustain it, but the traditions of men; and it has everything to condemn it in the word of God. The case of Lydia is sometimes brought forward. (Acts xvi. 14, 15.) We are informed that the Lord opened her heart to receive the things that Paul spake; and that she was baptised, and her household. Is there anything said about children here? If there is, I will give up the discussion. In the last verse of this chapter, we read, "And they"—that is, Paul and Silas—"went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the *brethren*, they comforted them, and departed." This indicates clearly the character of those who composed the household of Lydia: they were *brethren*—that is, *baptised believers.* The learned Dr. Whitby, though a Pedo-baptist, seems to be satisfied of this: "And when she, and those of her household, *were instructed* in the christian faith, in the

nature of baptism required by it, she was baptised and her household." See his *paraphrase* on the place.

The baptism of the household of Stephanas is recorded in I. Corinthians i. 16. Paul says, "And I baptised also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptised any other." Whether the inmates of the house of Stephanas, thus baptised, were children, or adults, we learn from the xvi. chap. 15. verse of the same Epistle. "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that *they have addicted themselves* to the ministry of the saints." This cannot be affirmed of infants: and we are driven *irresistibly* to the inference that the house of Stephanas was composed of believers in Jesus. Some distinguished Pedo-baptists have the candor to acknowledge this. The opinion of one will suffice. "The family of Stephanas seem all to have been adults when they were baptised, for they are said to have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints." See Macknight's notes on this passage.

We now come to the baptism of the jailer's household—Acts xvi. 30—34. The jailer, it seems, had been aroused to a sense of his true condition as a sinner, by the visible manifestations of the power of God. Deeply convicted of sin, he cried out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptised; he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into the house, he set meat before them; and rejoiced, *believing in God with all his house.*" Nothing need be said in illustration of this case. It is so plain that "a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." Here it is expressly declared that *all the house of the jailer believed in God*—and it was therefore perfectly right, in accordance with the genius of Christianity, and with the Gospel commission, for them to be baptised. Whoever looks for infant baptism in this passage, is acting the part of the man who searches for a copper coin, in a heap of the purest silver! There are, and always have been, and always will be, many households in which there are no children. And therefore the argument drawn from household baptism, in favor of the baptism of babes, is not worthy of serious attention. In the language of a learned writer, quoted by Pengilly, "Families may be without children; they may be grown up, &c. So it is *a wild inference* to ground infant baptism upon." Lawson's Baptismalogia, page 92.

Saul of Tarsus, after his sight was restored, and he had received the Holy Ghost, arose, and was baptised. Acts ix. 17, 18.

Cornelius, and his friends, heard Peter, *received* the Holy Ghost, and were baptised. Acts x. 44—48.

The disciples at Ephesus *heard*, and were baptised. Acts xvi. 32—34.

At Samaria, those who *believed*, were baptised, *both men and women*. Acts viii. 12.

Crispus and *all his house*, and many Corinthians, *heard, believed, and were baptised*—Acts xviii. 5. If infants were numbered amongst *the baptised*, is it not unaccountable that no mention is made of them?

Reference is frequently made to Matthew xix. 13, 14, as though it favored the pretensions of infant baptism. "Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Marks adds, "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." There is not a word—there is not the most distant hint; nor even allusion, here, respecting the subject of infant baptism. And nothing but the weakness of their cause would have led its advocates to an appeal to these verses. The infants came to be blessed by Christ, and not to be baptised. The language is plain and explicit. If taking a child into one's arms, and blessing it, constitutes baptism, why then it follows, that the individual now addressing you, has baptised his child more than a hundred times. And I venture to say that many *Baptist* parents, here to-day, will be found in the same predicament. Look at the passage again. "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And now I ask, in the fear of God, if you can, upon the faith of that passage, claim baptism for your children? It gives just as much authority, for bringing them to the communion table, or for inducting them into the sacred functions of the ministerial office. There is not one precept, or declaration, in the whole of the New Testament, to which you can turn and say, this teaches infant baptism! I challenge you to point me to such a passage. And if you succeed, I promise in the presence of God, and of men; and I call upon these sacred and venerable walls, to bear witness—I will immediately renounce my principles. I will go farther. I have at home a beloved, and unconscious child; whom I have often blessed, but never baptised. I will hasten to my home. *These hands shall baptise my child*—And, to my dying day, I will vindicate the cause of infant baptism; which I am now endeavoring to overthrow. But you *will not* go to the Bible for this proof—you *cannot* go there. You will everywhere find the condemnation of your practice writ-

ten, in characters deep, and indelible. And when you are willing to be guided *only* by the Scriptures: when you are willing to give up the traditions of antiquity; then you will be willing to abandon the baptism of infants.

We will now briefly consider the argument to which Pedo-baptists resort, when they are driven from the Bible, and to which they cling as their last hope. They contend that baptism comes into the place of circumcision: the male children of the Jews were all circumcised, and therefore the children of christians are all to be baptised. And here we meet our opponents at the very threshold of the argument, and demand the scriptural proof of this bold asseveration. Alas, they cannot give it! The Lord has communicated no such revelation. The Bible is silent upon the subject. And we are constrained to pronounce it a fabrication of man. You learned it from the Church of Rome; and like all the errors of that apostate Church, it may have its day of existence, and of popularity, but it is doomed to destruction. That the Jews circumcised their male children, we readily admit—for that is a matter of special revelation. But that baptism has come into the place of circumcision, we deny—on the ground that there is no express authority in the Scriptures for such a supposition. Circumcision did indeed prevail amongst the Jews—not however as a *church act*, but as a *national* act. The Jews were all circumcised, and yet a great part of them were abandoned in their principles, and in their lives. Persons good and bad, whether they feared God or not, had their children circumcised. Every male descendant of Abraham received the rite of circumcision, not as a seal that he was a child of God, but as a mark that he was a Jew—that he was a son of Abraham, in whose person, and for whose posterity, the rite was instituted. But how different is it with the Church of Christ! It is not confined to the Jews—it is not confined to the Greeks. But it is composed of every kindred, and nation, and tongue, and people under heaven, who believe in God. There is no difference between the Jew, and the Greek, the Scythian, and the Barbarian, the Bond, and the Free—but the same God over all, is rich in mercy to all that call upon him. And how different is Christian baptism from Jewish circumcision. It is not a *national* act, but it is a *church* act. It is not a Jewish ceremony, but it is a Christian ceremony. It was not instituted for the descendants of Abraham, but it was instituted for the disciples of Christ. It is not a rite which is to be confined to the male children of the Hebrews, and their proselytes; but it is a rite which is to be administered to every *man*, and to every *woman* upon earth, who is a believer. Here is

the only qualification, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

Our Brethren seem to forget that there is a total difference between the Jewish Economy, and the Christian Economy—between the dispensation of the Law, and the dispensation of the Gospel. The rites and ceremonies of the Jewish Law were all abolished when Christ came—their fasts, their festivals, and their ordinances ceased. The Apostle declares that Christ has removed the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to His cross. We are told that "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Consequently He introduced an entirely new state of things. It was not the old Abrahamic Covenant renewed—the old Jewish Dispensation remodelled—but it was the Christian Church, a new and holy organization, which He built up in the world. The Jewish Church was composed of the whole nation, good and bad: but the Christian Church is composed of *spiritual materials*—of *baptised believers*. And therefore Peter says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness, into his marvellous light." (I. Peter ii. 9.) Now how does it comport with all this, to say that a Jewish rite has been continued in the Christian Church—that circumcision is still kept up in baptism? This is a palpable denial of the Word of God. We are here taught that every previous dispensation has given way to the dispensation of Christ. Old things have passed away; and all things have become new. We now have new precepts, new promises, new commandments, and new ordinances.

If circumcision is thus to be perpetuated amongst christians, it seems to me that consistency requires that you should have various rites, corresponding with all the ceremonies of the Jews. You must have your fasts, and festivals: your feasts of tabernacles, of harvests, and of jubilee. You must have your incense, your burnt-offerings, your altars, and your sacrifices. In a word, to be consistent, you must become in all respects *christianized Jews!* What would you think, if you were to see a man build an altar, gather wood for a burnt-offering, and sacrifice upon that altar a calf, or a lamb—and if he were to tell you in justification of the deed, that he was sacrificing, because the Jews used to sacrifice? Why, you would say that he was making a Jew of himself. I will leave this respected audience to determine, whether those are not in a similar predicament, who sprinkle their infants, *because* the Jews circumcised theirs.

In the xv. chapter of Acts, it is recorded that "certain men came down from Judea, and taught the brethren that unless they were circumcised, according to the law of Moses, they could not be saved." After considerable disputation and dissension, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas, and some others, should be despatched as messengers to Jerusalem, to consult the Apostles and elders respecting this question. The church at Jerusalem immediately assembled; and, after discussing the subject, sent an epistle by the hands of Paul and Barnabas, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, to the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia. In that epistle they say, "we have heard that certain which went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: *to whom we gave no such commandment.*" What can be more conclusive than this? The church in Jerusalem said in reference to the Judaising teachers, who insisted upon the necessity of circumcision, *we gave no such commandment.* They thus virtually declared that the rite of circumcision was abolished. Now if baptism has come into the place of circumcision, is it not most astonishing that this apostolic church said not a word on the subject, in their letter to the gentile converts? The easiest and the surest way of calming their fears, and quieting their dissensions, would have been to have used language to this effect: "Brethren you have been deceived by false teachers. Circumcision is not required by the christian dispensation; it is abolished, and baptism is established in the place thereof." This would have been all-sufficient—it would have healed their divisions, and settled the dispute forever. But no such communication was made—*they gave no such commandment.* I beseech my Pedo-baptist brethren to consider this point. It is one of importance. When we command the baptism of infants, *we do more than the Apostles did.* When we declare that the children of Christians are to be baptised, because the children of Jews were circumcised, we utter a sentiment that would have sounded strange in the ears of the first Christian Church planted in Jerusalem.

But this practice, if founded on circumcision, is directly condemned in the Word of God. Baptism, you argue, is derived from circumcision. Be it so. It is, then, essentially the right that was instituted when the Abrahamic covenant was made. The manner of its observance, and the name, have been changed—but in all other respects baptism is circumcision. Now listen to what the apostle Paul says! "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircum-

cision; but faith which worketh by love." (Galatians v. 2, 3, 6.) According to your own principles, this position of the Word of God demolishes your structure, and is a solemn warning to the advocates of infant baptism. Oh my brethren, think seriously on the subject! You are injuring yourselves, you are injuring your children, you are injuring the cause of God, by adhering to this practice. You are destroying the spirituality of Christianity. You are proclaiming the superiority of a former dispensation. You are forsaking the plain precepts of Jesus Christ, for the institutions of the Jews.

I now proceed to show that infant baptism originated some one or two hundred years after Christ, when the Roman Catholic Church was in its incipient state; and that it has been and is still warmly contended for by many on the ground that it secures the salvation of those who die in infancy, by cleansing them from original sin. If I am able to prove this, an important point will be gained—and I promise to prove it to-day before this vast assembly, if there is truth in witnesses. None of my witnesses are Baptists: they are all Pedo-baptists, and no one can object to their testimony.

I will first give the testimony of several learned and eminent men, to the effect that infant baptism is not taught in the Bible.

"It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first christians after the apostles." Luther, quoted in Ped. Exam. Vol. ii. p. 4.

"There is not a single precept for, nor example of this practice, through the whole New Testament." Palmer's answer to Priestly on the Lord's Supper, p. 7.

Calvin, in his fourth book of Institutes, chapter xvi., confesses that it is no where expressly mentioned by the evangelists that any one child was baptized by the apostles.

"There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for baptism of infants." Bishop Burnet, Expos. of the Articles, Article xxvii.

"The baptism of infants is therefore named a *tradition*, because it is not expressly delivered in scripture that the apostles did baptise infants; nor any express precept there found that they should do so." Dr. Field, on the Church, p. 375.

"If we wish to ascertain from whom such an institution was originated, we should say, certainly not from Christ himself." Neander's History of the First Planting of the Christian Church. Vol. I. p. 190. Neander is one of the greatest of Ecclesiastical Historians. His character as an evangelical, profound, and philosophical writer, is known to all scholars.

"All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the apostolic age,

and to the fundamental principles of the New Testament." Professor Lange on Baptism, p. 101.

"Infant Baptism can be supported neither by a distinct apostolical tradition, nor apostolical practice." Baumgarten Crusius, Hist. of Theol. p. 1208.

Gesenius, the celebrated Hebraist, being informed in conversation that the Baptists in America reject infant baptism, and baptise only adults on a profession of their faith, remarked, "that is perfectly right, it is according to the Bible." Christian Review, Vol. iii. p. 201.

"It is a plain case that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings. The proof then that it is a divine institution must be sought for somewhere else." Dr. Wood's Lectures, p. ii.

These authorities, (and their number might be greatly augmented if the time did allow,) will suffice to show that the Baptists are not alone in thinking that infant baptism has no place in Scripture. Candid men of various denominations agree with them. And after listening to the declarations of such learned men as I have quoted, and comparing their declarations with the Word of God itself, you must perceive how wild and extravagant is the course of those, who at all hazards, and against all testimony, preach up infant baptism from the Bible. What could have induced such men as Luther, and Burnet, and Neander, and Woods, to acknowledge that infant baptism is not taught in the New Testament? So far from having anything to gain, they had everything to lose by such a concession. Having thoroughly investigated the subject, they only gave utterance to the calm, sober, and unavoidable convictions of their own minds.

I have stated that infant baptism was introduced some one or two hundred years after Christ, and I now bring forward my proof. Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement, and all the fathers who immediately succeeded the apostles, are entirely silent on the subject. No traces of it are found in the first century—nor in the second, until towards its very close. Tertullian, an African Bishop, flourished about the year 200. He is the first writer, (of all the ancients,) who mentions infant baptism; and he mentions it only to condemn it. If infant baptism had been kept up as an ordinance in the Church from the days of the apostles, why was it not mentioned in any of the writings of the fathers?—and when first brought to view, why was it mentioned in terms of condemnation? The question is easily answered. It was a recent innovation. It was just then being brought into the Church.

Dr. Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln, in his letter to Mr. Tombs, says, "I believe and know that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for infant baptism, nor any just evidence for it for about 200 years after Christ. The truth is, I do believe infant baptism, how or by whom I know not, came into the world in the second century, and in the third or fourth began to be practised, though not generally."

Limborch informs us that "the necessity of infant baptism was never asserted by any Council before that of Carthage, held in the year 418."

To the same effect, Grotius, in his annotations on Matt. xix. 14, states that "in the Councils of the ancients, one shall find no earlier mention of Pedo-baptism, than in the Council of Carthage." Thus although infant baptism began to be introduced about the year 200, it seems that it was not publicly discussed until the Council of Carthage, in the year 418.

"In the two first ages no person was baptised till he was instructed in the faith, and tinctured with the doctrine of Christ, and could testify his own faith—because of those words of Christ, 'he that believeth and is baptised'—*therefore believing was first.*" Suicerus, in Ped. Exam. Vol. ii. p. 76.

"Infant baptism was not known in the world the two first ages after Christ. In the third and fourth it was approved of by few. At length in the fifth and following ages it began to obtain in divers places." "The custom of baptising infants did not begin before the third age after Christ, and there appears not the least footstep of it in the two first centuries." Carcellacus at Supra. The writer just quoted was a learned Divine of Geneva, and professor of Divinity.

"All the earlier traces of infant baptism are very doubtful. In the fourth century its validity was generally acknowledged. Augustine pointed out the removal of original sin, and the sins of the children, as its definite object; *and through his representations was its universal diffusion promoted.*" Bretschneider's Theology, p. 469.

"Originally only adults were baptised: but at the end of the second century in Africa, and in the third century generally, infant baptism was introduced; and in the fourth century it was theologically maintained by Augustine." Winer's Manual Lectures.

"The first traces of infant baptism are found in the Western Church, after the middle of the second century, and it was the subject of controversy in Proconsular Asia, towards the end of this century. Though its necessity was asserted in Africa and Egypt in the beginning of the third century, it was even to the end of the fourth century by no means universally observed—least of all in the

Eastern Church. Notwithstanding the recommendation of it by the fathers, *it never became a general ecclesiastical institution till the age of Augustine.*" Rheinwald, p. 313.

"An opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptized; and for that reason the custom arose of baptizing infants." Salmasius, in Ped. Exam. Vol. ii. p. 128.

The first christian fathers who supported infant baptism, urged its observance on the ground of its cleansing and regenerating influence.

"As far as in us lies, no soul, if possible, is to be lost. It is not for us to hinder any person from baptism and the grace of God; which rule, as it holds to all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants, to whom our help and the Divine mercy is rather to be granted; because by their weeping and wailing at their first entrance into the world, they do intimate nothing so much as that they implore compassion." Cyprian, A. D. 253.

"For no one comes to the kingdom of heaven, but by the sacrament of baptism. Infants that are baptised are reformed back again from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature." Ambrose, A. D. 390.

"The grace of baptism gives cure without pain, and fills us with the grace of the Spirit. Some think that the heavenly grace consists only in *the forgiveness of sins:* but I have reckoned up *ten* advantages of it. If sudden death seize us before we are baptised, though we have a thousand good qualities, there is nothing to be expected but hell." Chrysostom, A. D. 398. These writers are referred to, and the original passages given, in Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. Vol. I. ch. 6; and Vol. II. ch. 6.

It is stated by some of the writers above quoted, that infant baptism is not mentioned in any Council of the ancients, until that of Carthage, in 418. Let us refer to the Canons of that Council, and see what was their view of the efficacy of baptism, as thus administered.

"Whoever denies that children just born are to be baptised, or says that they are to be baptised for the remission of sins, but derive nothing of original sin from Adam which is to be expiated by the laver of regeneration—let him be accursed." "Even little children, who have not yet been capable of committing any sin in themselves, are thus truly baptised for the remission of sins, that what they have derived by generation, may be cleansed by regeneration." "If any one says that, because the Lord has said, In my Father's house are mansions, it is to be understood that there is a place in the kingdom of heaven, or a place anywhere at all, in which children are happy who leave this world without baptism, (without which they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,

which is eternal life,) let him be accursed." See the Canons of the Council of Carthage in Wiggers' Presentation of Augustinism and Pelagianism, p. 171.

In this famous Council Aurelius of Carthage, and Donatianus of Telepte, presided. But Augustine was the ruling spirit. He guided and influenced its discussions—and he was the father of its canons and decrees. Mr. Robinson very justly remarks that in this instance Augustine ventured farther than Balaam had done. Balaam said, "how shall I curse whom God has not cursed?" But Augustine says, "whoever denies infant baptism, *let him be accursed.*" I respect the great abilities, the fervent piety, and the eminent services of this christian father—and I do not feel that it is a breach of true charity to say that, in this case, he was a false prophet!

Listen again to what Augustine says in reference to the efficacy of baptism: "The baptism of infants, as well as of adults, is for the forgiveness of sin. Children have indeed committed no actual sins, yet by original sin, they are under the power of the devil, from which they are freed by baptism. Hence christian children, who die before baptism, no more escape positive punishment in the future life, than do all who are not christians." Wiggers' Aug. and Pel. p. 268. These are the opinions of the man who first theologically maintained infant baptism, and through whose influence its general diffusion was promoted. It is worthy of remark, that Augustine contended as strenuously for *infant communion* as he did for infant baptism. "He tells us that the church held that both ordinances were saving, and necessary to eternal life; and on the ground of this supposed saving quality, he informs us that the church viewed them both as *traditions* from the apostles." Chapin on Baptism, p. 4. Cyprian, A. D. 253, who first *defended* the practice of infant baptism, was no less zealous and strenuous in the defence of infant communion.

According to the Church of England Catechism, the child is taught to say, "in my baptism, I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." After sprinkling an infant, the minister is enjoined to return thanks *for its regeneration!!!* See Episcopal Prayer Book, p. 159, Edition of 1830—in which the following language occurs, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy Holy Church."

"As to the grounds of infant baptism; if infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism: seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved unless this be washed away

by baptism." Doctrinal Tracts, p. 261—published by order of the General Conference of the Methodist Denomination. As will soon appear, these are essentially, and indeed *literally*, the views of Mr. John Wesley.

That writer says, "I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not sinned away that 'washing of the Holy Ghost' which was given me in baptism." Wesley's Works, Vol. III. p. 70.

Hear what he says still farther, as to the efficacy of this ordinance: "What are the benefits we receive by baptism, is the next point to be considered. And the first of these is, the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death. The virtue of this free gift, the merits of Christ's life and death, are applied to us in baptism. He gave Himself for the Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; namely, in baptism, the ordinary instrument of our justification." "By baptism, we who were by nature children of wrath, are made the children of God. And this regeneration, which our church in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith; being grafted into the body of Christ's Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace. This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord, Except a man be born again of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. By water then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again." "As to the grounds of it: *If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism; seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism.* Indeed where it cannot be had, the case is different; but extraordinary cases do not make void a standing rule. This therefore is our first ground. Infants need to be washed from original sin; therefore they are proper subjects of baptism." Wesley's Works, Vol. vi. pages 14, 15, 16. Let these extracts speak for themselves. It is altogether unnecessary that they should receive either note or comment.

Similar quotations might be given from multitudes of Pedo-baptist writers. But I forbear. I have produced my witnesses, and here I am willing to rest my cause. If many of the warmest friends and supporters of infant baptism acknowledge that it has no place in the Scriptures—if others admit that it was introduced two hundred years after Christ—if its *first* champions maintained it on the ground that it was essential to the salvation of those dying in infancy—and if, over a considerable portion of the christian world, it is even now believed to be a *regenerating ordinance*, a *washing of the Holy Ghost*—I say, if these things be so, it should not be matter

of surprise that the Baptists have set their faces steadily and sternly against it—and they ought not to be accused of giving way to a sectarian and uncharitable spirit, when they condemn it as unscriptural, as subversive of gospel truth, and as savouring of the Roman apostacy.

I will now offer a few reasons why we are opposed to infant baptism. And the time already consumed in this discussion, renders it desirable that my concluding remarks should be brief.

1. We are opposed to infant baptism because it is not taught in the Scriptures. This has been already proved, and this is an all-sufficient reason why it should be resisted. The Word of God is, or should be, the only rule of faith and practice amongst christians. If you once yield this principle, you open a flood-gate for ten thousand errors and abominations to flow into the Church. We are safe from superstition and error only while we cling to the Bible. You see the truth of this remark illustrated in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. They have long since ceased to acknowledge the Bible as their sole rule and directory, and followed the traditions of their Fathers, the decrees of their Councils, and the laws of their Church. And what has been the result? As a body, the Roman Catholic Church are grossly superstitious in their faith and practice. They are, in many respects, no better than the Heathen. They have made a God of the Pope—they have made saints of some men who manifested the spirit of demons—they buy and sell the souls of men with the pelf of this world—they worship images—they pray to the angels—and, when countenanced by the civil authority, they persecute and destroy, with fire and sword, all christians who dare to question their infallibility, and to dispute their high ecclesiastical pretensions. All this results from the fact that they have forsaken the Bible. One of their first acts in forsaking the Bible, (for, although the Pope was not actually created for some hundreds of years after, the Catholic Church was then in its incipient state, and the "mystery of iniquity" had begun to work—I say, one of their first acts,) was the introduction of infant baptism. Some ages after, they introduced the baptism of bells—which practice they continue to the present day. And I would respectfully ask, where is the difference between them? *Both rest upon tradition.* Ask a Romanist, whence he derives his baptism of bells?—and he will reply by asking you the origin of infant baptism. And he will then inform you that both are derived from one source, not from the Scriptures, but from the decrees and traditions of his church! In so saying, he speaks the truth. You cannot disprove it. You will have no argument with which to meet his assertion. All the argument is on his side. And in the end you will have to admit, either that in-

fant baptism is a profanation of an ordinance of Jesus Christ, or that it is a good and christian ordinance simply because the Roman Catholic Church teaches that it is so! Oh, how much better it is to go to the Bible, and learn there that we are to consecrate our children to the Lord, not by baptising them, but by endeavoring to bring them up in His nurture and admonition! And when they have arrived at a proper age, and have believed in Christ, then let them be baptised—for the Saviour has said, not he that is merely baptised, but "he that *believeth*, and is baptised, shall be saved."

2. We are opposed to infant baptism, because it is an ordinance of man. If it is not enjoined in the Bible, and if it originated 200 years after Christ, it is certainly an ordinance of man—and if it is an ordinance of man, the christian ought certainly to have nothing to do with it. Reference has already been made to the ancient observance of infant communion. All readers of Church History know that it began to prevail about, or a little after, the time of the first mention of infant baptism. Infants were made to partake of the Lord's Supper.* Having been baptised, they were regarded as members of the church; and it was thought that communion ought to succeed baptism. Here was one evil growing out of another: here was one error following another—because they had introduced into the church a human ordinance. If a man has a right to introduce one ordinance, he has a right to introduce another. And if he has a right to introduce ordinances of his own, it follows that he has a right to introduce his own doctrines, and his own principles. If this be true, farewell virtue! farewell religion! farewell holy Gospel of God!—for thou canst not prevail, where the ordinances and the doctrines of men predominate. Man has no business to interfere with the duties of religion. He is not to command, but to obey. He is not to teach, but to be taught. He is not to originate doctrines and ordinances, but he is to receive the doctrines, and to keep the ordinances of Jesus Christ, as they are taught in the Gospel. Wo to that man who adds to, or takes from, the commandments of this holy volume! "God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Revelation, xxii. 19.

3. We object to infant baptism because it can do our children no good. I should as soon administer baptism to an object destitute of life, as to an infant. Do you ask, why? Because they are equally insensible, so far as the duties and demands of religion are concerned.

* See Mosheim's Ch. Hist. Vol. I. p. 206—where the following writers are referred to, Mayer, *de Eucharistia Infantum;* and Zornius, *Histor. Eucharist. Infantum.*

and baptism is to be administered only to subjects who are capable of thinking, of feeling, and of believing. Many persons still believe in baptismal regeneration. As I have already shown, some return thanks for the regeneration of a child at its baptism; and others say that ordinarily, persons dying in infancy are not saved, unless they have been baptised. But the Baptists cordially detest, and loudly condemn this doctrine. They are often accused of relying too much upon baptism. But the accusation applies only to those by whom it is brought. We say that baptism is good in its place: it comes after faith: it is to be administered, *precisely in the scriptural mode*, to every one that believes. But they say that it is good in its place, and out of its place: before faith, and after faith; by immersion, by sprinkling, or by pouring. And so great is their faith in its marvellous efficacy, that they apply it to their children. But of what benefit is it to the child? Does it change his heart? No. Does it soften his temper? No. Does it infuse faith into his soul? No. Does it give him any new principles? No. Does it render it probable that he will be more apt to become a christian, in after life, than other children? No. Where then, in the name of religion, and of common sense, is the benefit that he derives from it? Let Pedo-baptists reply.

4. We are opposed to infant baptism because it does a positive injury to the cause of God, and to the souls of men. Persons are thus introduced into the church, who have no business there; and it is made to consist, in a great measure, of unconscious babes, and of unconverted men. I am aware that the reply may be made that although infants are sprinkled, they are not regarded, properly speaking, as members of the church, until they arrive at years of discretion, and join for themselves. But look at matters as they really exist. Baptism is either the rite of initiation into the Christian Church, or it is not. If it is not, then no persons who have been baptised are members—but if it is, it follows that all are members who have been baptised, whether men, or women, or children. And Pedo-baptists act upon this principle. There are hundreds and thousands of communicants in various Pedo-baptist churches, who make no pretensions to a change of heart. This is a grievous evil. Whence did it originate? It came from Pedo-baptism. They were sprinkled when they were children; they were brought up to regard themselves as members of the church, and they have continued such ever since. The abominable tenets of Unitarianism and Universalism are extensively prevalent in the northern portion of these United States. If you ask their origin, we reply that their advocates, for the most part, came originally from Pedo-baptist churches. They were sprinkled in infancy—and afterwards looked upon them-

selves as christians, although they knew nothing of a change of heart. In this state they were prepared for the reception of the most revolting and ruinous errors. And it was natural for them to embrace doctrines which elevate and dignify human nature, however dishonoring they may be to God. In some instances, a minister and his whole church have gone over to the Unitarians.* These facts, besides others that might be presented, show some of the fruits of infant baptism. It has been baneful in its influence over the Church, ever since it came into the world. It has deceived many thousands of souls, and led them, in a fatal security, down to the chambers of eternal death. Oh my hearers, beware lest your children become the ruined victims of this great destroyer!

5. We object to infant baptism because it is without meaning. There is a vast amount of meaning in the immersion of a professed believer. He thus takes upon him the christian profession. He thus proclaims his renunciation of the world. And by this act he says, I am dead and buried to sin, and I will arise to newness of life. But there is no such meaning as this in infant baptism. The child understands neither its nature, nor design. He cannot comprehend the obligation it imposes, nor the solemn vow of dedication to God it involves. He will manifest surprise and alarm during its infliction: he will forget it the next moment; and in after life he will know nothing of it, unless he is told. Does this look like an institution of the Saviour? Does this look like an ordinance of Him, who spake as never man spake? Is this in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel? Is this one of the revelations of the Christian Dispensation? If it is, the individual now addressing you, declares that *he*, for one, has no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no mind to understand—he is as blind as mid-night, as deaf as the grave, as senseless as the pale and silent corpse, that has been shrouded in the white garments of death, and deposited within the narrow limits of the tomb?

I will conclude the exercises in which we have been engaged, by reading an extract from a letter of a man of solid learning and deep piety, who was once a Pedo-baptist, but from the convictions of duty, became a Baptist.

"MARIETTA, *June* 28, 1838.

"Perhaps you know I have preached for about two years past to a Presbyterian church in the country. Some eighteen months ago, an elder of that church became a Baptist. On the occasion of his baptism, a sermon was preached by Rev. HIRAM GEAR, the Baptist minister in Marietta. This sermon disturbed several members of

* The author has been recently informed that this is substantially the history of the Unitarian Church in Charleston, So. Ca.

my church, and the session requested me to preach on baptism, in reply. I declined, saying the best way to manage the excitement was, totally to disregard it; pleading my duties in college, &c. Soon the session applied to me a second time, insisting that I *must* preach on the subject; several members of the church were in trouble, and *a discourse must be delivered.* Finding that the interest in the subject was not likely to die by *neglect* on my part, I told the church I would prepare a discourse as soon as practicable, and begged them to remain quiet, till they should hear what I might have to say.

"Thus compelled to write, I determined to go into an original investigation of the whole matter, proceeding just as if I had never heard or read anything on either side, and endeavoring with a spirit of candid and prayerful inquiry, to seek after the mind of Christ. I began my researches by reading Professor Stuart on *baptizo*, the ablest Pedo-baptist work on the philology of the subject. The inquiry was, what does Christ mean, when he commands his ministers to baptise? I was soon astonished to find in Stuart's investigation, proof so strong that the word in its literal, ordinary sense, universally means *to immerse*, *plunge*, or *dip*. It looked as if, with this fact before him, the learned Professor ought to have become a Baptist. I was alarmed, and would have given up the inquiry, but could not. I laid aside Stuart, and entered upon an investigation of the original Scriptures, relative to the language used respecting the ordinance. I also examined Josephus, and the classics, so far as I had the means. The further I prosecuted my inquiries, the stronger was the evidence in favor of Baptist views. Thus passed some months. The people had become tired of asking after my sermon on baptism, but my conscience would not suffer me to abandon the investigation. I therefore continued to apply to it, as other duties permitted, all my powers, till I was compelled to admit, as a philologist and interpreter of the Bible, that *immersion, and that only, is the baptism which Christ enjoins.*

"Afterwards I took up infant baptism, and here I found myself in clouds and darkness. I wandered about in the fogs with which writers have shrouded the Abrahamic covenant, the connection between the Old and the New Dispensations, the substitution of modern for ancient rites and ordinances, the obscure passages of Ecclesiastical History, bewildered and perplexed—all, as I now believe, because I would not trust to the *Word of God*, to guide me to *God's Institutions.* I conversed with my Pedo-baptist friends, I prayed and wept, and groaned. I would lay down the subject for weeks, then resume it, till some three or four months ago, I was

obliged, in the fear of God, to conclude, that none but *believers in Jesus have a right to the ordinances of Jesus.*

"I lay no claim to infallibility, but if I am wrong, I am *conscientiously* so—I am so after a most laborious and protracted search for truth. I have acted also in opposition to all the prejudices of early years—of classical and theological study; prejudices confirmed by twelve years' connection with a Pedo-baptist church, during six of which I acted as a minister of Christ. And not only my church relations, but all my literary associations, my family connections, and my temporal interests have combined to withhold me from the result to which I have come. These I cheerfully sacrifice to my convictions of truth and duty." See Jewett on Baptism, p. 12.

And now, Brethren, I have discharged the duty assigned me. I have proclaimed honestly and plainly what I believe to be the truth. And permit me in concluding, to exhort you to search the Scriptures, that ye may know whether these things be so. "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance amongst all them that are sanctified." And may the Lord baptise us all with the Holy Ghost; sanctify us through His Word, which is truth, and prepare us for that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away! AMEN.

APPENDIX.

The author has stated more than once, in the course of the foregoing discussion, that the Roman Catholic Church was in *its incipient state*, when infant baptism made its appearance, at the close of the second century, or in the beginning of the third. As he has been gravely charged with manifesting an ignorance of Church History, by "talking of the incipiency of Roman Catholicism, so long before the Pope was really crowned, and while the Church was yet pure" (?) he has thought it desirable to insert a little testimony here, on the subject.

All Ecclesiastical Historians of any note admit that many of the corruptions of "the man of sin" were introduced amongst christians in the second and third centuries—and some contend that the church began to decline in *purity* even at the close of the first century. Now if we can prove that other errors, which peculiarly distinguish the Roman Church, originated about the time of the introduction of infant baptism—we are surely warranted to say that *that* church was then in *its incipient state*. Milner says, (in his Church Hist. Cent. ii. chap. ix,) "a dark shade is enveloping these divine glories, (the glories of the christian religion, as exhibited in the lives of its professors.) The Spirit of God is grieved already by the ambitious intrusions of self-righteousness, argumentative refinements, and pharisaic pride; and though it be more common to represent the sensible decay of godliness as commencing a century later, *to me it seems already begun.*"

The testimony of Mosheim is more explicit, and is abundantly corroborative of our position. Take for instance, the following remarks concerning the ceremonies used in the second century—"There is no institution so pure and excellent which the corruption and folly of man will not in time alter for the worse, and load with additions foreign to its nature and original design. Such, in a particular manner, was the fate of christianity. In this (the *second*,) century, many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the christian worship, the introduction of which was extremely offensive to wise and good men. These changes, while they

destroyed the beautiful simplicity of the gospel, were naturally pleasing to the gross multitude, who are more delighted with the pomp and splendour of external institutions, than with the native charms of rational and solid piety, and who generally give little attention to any objects but those which strike their outward senses." Mosheim's Ch. Hist. Vol. 1, page 196.

"The comparison of the christan *oblations* with the Jewish *victims* and *sacrifices*, produced a multitude of unnecessary rites, and was the occasion of introducing that erroneous notion of the *eucharist*, which represents it as a *real sacrifice*, and not merely as a commemoration of that great *offering* which was once made upon the cross for the sins of mortals." (Mosheim Vol. 1. page 199.) Persons of common information know that this is one of the grand abominations of Popery—and this, according to the writer just quoted, was introduced in the *second century*.

"A great part of the service of the church in this (the *second*) century, had a certain air of the heathen mysteries, and resembled them considerably in many particulars." "They administered milk and honey to such as were newly received into the church, showing them, by this sign, that by their baptism they were born again, and were bound to manifest the simplicity and innocence of infants in their lives and conversations." (Mosheim, Vol. I. page 200.) What is this, if it is not Popery begun?

"After baptism, they received the *sign of the cross*, were *anointed*, and by prayers and imposition of hands, were solemnly commended to the mercy of God, and dedicated to his service; in consequence of which they received *milk* and *honey*, which concluded the ceremony." (Mosheim Vol. I. page 207.) If this is not the *incipiency of Roman Catholicism*, I would respectfully ask, where it is to be sought? If we go into the third century, we find the origin of *exorcisms*, and *spells* of various kinds—of *celibacy*, of *penance*, and many other human inventions. And these abominations continue to increase from age to age, until the Pope of Rome is crowned *universal Bishop*. And then we behold Popery in its *manhood*, firmly established, and swaying over Christendom its bloody and abominable sceptre!

The author thinks he has said enough to prove his position—that at the time of the introduction of infant baptism, in the close of the second century, the Roman Catholic Church was in its *incipient state*.